

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 26694 231024Z

12

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

SAM-01 /058 W

----- 003976

R 231006Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5971

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 26694

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, CH, VN, CB, LA, TH

SUBJECT: PRC VIEWS ON INDOCHINA

REF:FBIS BK180632Y DEC 75

SUMMARY: RTG OFFICIAL REPORTS CHINESE CONCERN OVER POSITION
IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY OFFICERS MET DECEMBER 19 WITH TET BUNNAK, MFA
EAST ASIA DIVISION CHIEF, FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION ON COUNTRIES
WITHIN HIS AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY. ALTHOUGH WE ARE POUCHING
MEMCON TO ADDRESSEES, BELIEVE PRC COMMENTS TO RTG CON-
CERNING COUNTRIES OF INDOCHINA, WHICH HE RELATED, TO BE OF
PARTICULAR INTEREST.

2. TET REFERRED TO CONSIDERABLE CHINESE INTEREST IN LIMITING
NORTH VIETNAMESE INFLUENCE IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS, AND PAR-
TICULARLY IN THE FORMER. THE CHINESE HAVE APPARENTLY EX-
PRESSED TO THE RTG THEIR GREAT CONCERN OVER VIETNAMESE IN-
FLUENCE IN CAMBODIA AND INTEREST IN THE TUTCOME OF THE
GATHERING CONFLICT BETWEEN IENG SARY (WHOM THE PRC SUP-
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 26694 231024Z

PORTS) AND KHIEU SAMPHAN (WHOM THE DRV SUPPORTS). THE

CHINESE SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT THE STRUGGLE FOR DOMINATION IN CAMBODIA IS FAR FROM OVER AND MAY EVEN HAVE JUST BEGUN, HE SAID. THE CHINESE ARE ESPECIALLY ALARMED BY THE CONTINUING PRESENCE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY OF NORTH VIETNAMESE CADRE AND ADVISORS. TET SUGGESTED THAT THERE IS A VERY CLEAR CONFLUENCE OF INTEREST BETWEEN THE THAI AND CHINESE IN LIMITING DRV INFLUENCE IN CAMBODIA. HE FELT THAT IT WOULD MAKE A MATERIAL DIFFERENCE IN THE LEVEL OF INSURGENT ACTIVITY ALONG THE THAI-CAMBODIAN BORDER; I.E., BORDER INCIDENTS WOULD INCREASE SHOULD THIEU SAMPHAN GAIN THE UPPER HAND.

3. IN LAOS THE PRC IS ALSO ALARMED AT THE WANING OF THE DRV MOON. TED SAID THE CHINESE HAVE TOLD THE THAI THAT THEY ARE COMPLETELY STYMIED IN TRYING TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE NEW LEADERSHIP OF THE DPRL. KAYSONE PHOMVIHAN WILL APPARENTLY NOT EVEN TALK TO THE CHINESE EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE. THE CHINESE FAVORITE, PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, HAS BEEN SHUNTED OFF TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. IN THE SAME CONNECTION, THE CHINESE ARE APPARENTLY INCREASING THEIR MILITARY PRESENCE IN NORTHWEST LAOS.

4. COMMENT: WE ARE INTRIGUED BY THE REPORTED CHINESE CONCERN OVER THEIR INFLUENCE IN CAMBODIA. REFUGEES IN RECENT MONTHS HAVE MENTIONED FROM TIME TO TIME SEEING VIETNAMESE ADVISERS IN CAMBODIA, ALTHOUGH IT HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN CLEAR WHETHER THESE WERE VIETNAMESE BORN IN CAMBODIA OR VIET-NAM, PERHAPS MEANINGFUL IS THE FACT THAT IENG SARY, IN HIS SPEECH HONORING THE VISITING LAO DELEGATION IN PHNOM PENH DECEMBER 18, SAID THAT "WE ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS MOST PROFOUND THANKS TO THE VIETNAMESE, CHINESE" AND OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (REF), NAMING THE VIETNAMESE FIRST. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WATCH THESE DEVELOPMENTS CAREFULLY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO26694
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750445-0350
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751217/aaaaaoez.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRC VIEWS ON INDOCHINA
TAGS: PFOR, CH, VN, CB, LA, TH, XC, (TET BUNNAK)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006